

# Industry Briefs

The **Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau**, along with its partners are hosting the first-ever **Rendezvous South Conference**, Dec. 2-4. This hosted-buyer event will draw planners who coordinate meetings throughout the South. *ConventionSouth* Magazine is the presenting sponsor.

The **Shreveport-Bossier Holiday Hot Deals** is a hotel and retail package program. The campaign, that includes an exclusive coupon book for hotel guests, will run Nov. 15-Jan.5, 2014 as a project of the **Shreveport-Bossier Hotel and Lodging Association**. Deals can be accessed at [www.shreveport-bossier.org/hotdeals](http://www.shreveport-bossier.org/hotdeals).

**Alicia Jamroz** has left **Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites** where she was previously a sales manager. She and her husband have opened **Bergeron's Boudin and Cajun Meats** located at 3933 Benton Road, Bossier City.

**Savoie's The Catering Place** located at 2441 E. 70th Street, Shreveport recently finished renovations and is open as a catering and events venue, holding up to 300 people.

Log on to [www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners](http://www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners) for industry events and updates



Convention & Tourist Bureau  
629 Spring Street  
Shreveport, LA 71101



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news from shreveport-bossier convention & tourist bureau

# TRAVEL TALK

Nov.-Dec. 2013

## Mardi Gras Bash Named One of American Bus Association's 2014 Top 100 Events



Shreveport-Bossier's Mardi Gras Bash draws group tours from throughout the region.

The American Bus Association (ABA) announced that Shreveport-Bossier's Mardi Gras Bash, to be held Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014, has been designated as one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2014 by an expert tourism industry selection committee.

"We are honored to have our Mardi Gras Bash be named as one of ABA's Top 100 Events for 2014," said Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. "We strive to capitalize on Shreveport-Bossier's cultural assets to attract more visitors to the area. We've had tour operators from across the country return to our Mardi Gras Bash year after year and its reputation attracts new groups each year."

ABA's 2014 Top 100 Events Selection Committee selected the Mardi Gras Bash from hundreds of event nominations submitted by ABA members. Judges considered the event's broad appeal, its accessibility to motorcoaches, skill at handling large groups, and a variety of other relevant criteria.

"The Mardi Gras Bash has a don't miss entertainment value that is only part of its selection this year," said Peter J. Pantuso, CTIS, ABA's president and CEO. "The real news here is that this Mardi Gras Bash has been recognized as a potential magnet for tourism dollars, at a time when reenergizing domestic tourism is so important to our spirit and our economy. The honor gives Shreveport-Bossier an important boost in visibility among professional tour planners."

According to studies completed by researchers at George Washington University and Dunham and Associates, one overnight visit by a motorcoach group can generate \$5,000 to more than \$11,000 in a local destination's economy. Those dollars are spent on lodging, meals, admissions, fees, shopping, souvenirs, services and local taxes.

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## Dates to Remember:

**Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association Seminar**

Nov. 18, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites in Bossier City

**Hospitality Breakfast**

Nov. 6, 8 a.m., Clarion Hotel  
Dec. 6, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., Bureau Christmas Open House

## NATJA Conference a Success

The North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA) hosted its annual conference in Shreveport-Bossier, Oct. 8-10.

NATJA is one of the premier professional associations of writers, photographers, editors and tourism professionals encouraging high quality professional journalism. Members have had articles published in international, national and regional publications.

"We were pleased to have the opportunity to host the NATJA Conference. This gave us an opportunity to showcase all the things visitors love about our area to media from across the country," said Stacy Brown, president of the Tourist Bureau.

Travel journalists toured the sister cities and had the opportunity to



enjoy local favorites such as Herby K's, zip line at Gators and Friends Alligator Park and Exotic Zoo, attend the Red River Revel Arts Festival and more during coordinated tours and dine-arounds.

"When I first heard that the conference was going to be held in Shreveport, I asked myself 'Why Shreveport?'. After the reception that we received from the bureau's staff and seeing what Shreveport-Bossier has to offer, I now see

why Shreveport was chosen. This conference has been wonderful and the host city has really shown out for us," said Marion Aldridge, author and NATJA conference attendee.

"A recent getaway with my three kids revealed Shreveport-Bossier City's family-friendly side. We found kid-friendly attractions, world-class museums and acclaimed restaurants."

—Jennifer Babisak, *IN Magazine*



Calendar of Events

Nov./Dec.

- 11/1 Diana Ross, Horseshoe Casino and Hotel
- 11/2 First Saturday Tour at the Norton: Images of Family, R.W. Norton Art Gallery
- 11/7 Science on the Rocks: Science of Food, Sci-Port: Louisiana's Science Center
- 11/8-9 Castles and Kingdoms Family Camp-In, Sci-Port: Louisiana's Science Center
- 11/8-1/18 "Object" An Art Exhibition by Joe Bluhm and Adam Volker, Artspace
- 11/16 National Black Rodeo Finals, CenturyLink Center
- 11/16 Chimp Discovery Day: Chimpanzees in Science and Medicine, Chimp Haven
- 11/16 Wagner and Strauss presented by the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra, RiverView Theater
- 11/16 Holy Angels' A Taste of Shreveport-Bossier, Bossier Civic Center
- 11/21 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, the Outlets of the Louisiana Boardwalk
- 11/21-11/23 Les Boutiques de Noel, Bossier Civic Center
- 11/25 Buddy Valastro: The Family Celebrations Tour, CenturyLink Center
- 11/29-12/22 Christmas in Roseland, Gardens of the American Rose Center
- 12/5 Tarzan – The Stage Musical, Emmett Hook Center
- 12/7 Cajun Christmas Festival, Cash Point "The Party Place"
- 12/7 Country Christmas Festival, Vivian
- 12/7 Christmas on Caddo Fireworks Festival, Caddo Lake in Oil City
- 12/7 KCS Holiday Express, KCS Shreveport Yard Gate #5
- 12/13 Shoji Tabuchi Christmas Show, the Strand Theater
- 12/21 LHSCA/LFCA East-West All Star Football Game, Independence Stadium
- 12/31 New Years at Noon, Sci-Port: Louisiana's Science Center
- 12/31 Advocare V100 Bowl, Independence Stadium

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Stacy Brown, President, Shreveport-Bossier Convention & Tourist Bureau

**Stacy Brown**, president, traveled with The Community Foundation of North Louisiana to attend the Birmingham InterCity Visit, Oct. 6-8, with Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover, elected officials, and business and community leaders. The intercity visit

is a strategy used by cities seeking to explore opportunities to enhance its citizens' quality of life. Brown will also attend the Society of American Travel Writers conference Oct. 20-25. While at SATW, Brown has appointments with travel journalists, including writers from *Southern Living*, *Midwest Living*, *AARP Magazine* and *Where to Retire Magazine* in addition to freelance writers.

**Dianna Douglas**, regional sales manager, submitted bids for the 2014 National Association of Motorcoach Operators Annual Conference, Louisiana Hospital Association meetings and 2014 Southern Public Relations Federation Annual Conference. She partnered with Holiday Inn West on sales calls targeting the East Texas oil and gas businesses and hosted several meeting planner site visits including Program Manager Claudia Hardy of the Deep South Network for Cancer Control and Jerry Defeo, meeting planner of the Region 5 Exchange Clubs.

**Suzanne Manfredi**, convention sales manager, recently won the bid for Fleet Reserve Ladies Auxiliary Association for 2014, 2015 and 2016. Manfredi also conducted Baton Rouge sales calls resulting in convention leads to bid on the 2016 and/or 2017 Police Jury Association and presented Shreveport-Bossier as a meeting and convention destination to the Louisiana Department of Education.

**Kelly Wells**, vice president of sports and tourism with the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, attended the Sports Relationship Conference, Sept. 9-12, to meet with other sports commissions and rights holders to attract more sports event to Shreveport-Bossier.

**Sheila Norman**, sports and tourism administrator with the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, attended the National Association of Sports Commission's Fall Market Segment, Oct. 7-8, to learn the latest trends in sports events.

**Sandra "Candy" Welch**, visitor information specialist, was recently hired to welcome visitors at the Shreveport Regional Airport following **Jerri Peterson's** retirement from the tourist bureau. Candy, a Texas native, has served on the Shreveport Mayors Women Commission, volunteered with People Helping People Community Outreach and the Star Mentor program and is the youth coordinator with The Giving Tree Miles of Smiles youth program and co-founder of Star Leadership Academy Art and Charm program for girls.

## Free Social Media Seminar Set for Nov. 18

The Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association, in conjunction with the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, announces the seminar, "New Tools and Techniques for Social Media," 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., Monday, Nov. 18, at the Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites located at 2015 Old Minden Road, Bossier City.

The social media landscape seems to change on a daily basis. From new marketing tools being introduced by Facebook and Twitter to social media "dashboards" like Buffer and SocialBro, there's an ever-changing landscape of social media options for promoting your business. But which of these new tools and techniques are worth the investment of time and effort? Chris Jay, public relations and social media manager for the Tourist Bureau, will lead this fun, three-part workshop on new ways to harness the power of social media in promoting your tourist attraction or business.



Join us for quarterly seminars to educate local attractions on latest industry and marketing trends.

### Seminar Features:

**9-10 a.m.**  
New Facebook Ad Products

**10-10:30 a.m.**  
Building and Launching Facebook Ads Demonstration

**10:30-11 a.m.**  
Twitter Scheduling Tools

**11 a.m.-12 p.m.**  
More New Tools and Techniques

**12-1 p.m. – Lunch**  
and Social Media Roundtable Discussion /Special Guest

**This seminar is free. Lunch is provided. Seating is limited. To R.S.V.P., please register at <https://sbaaq4.eventbrite.com/>.**

# Shreveport-Bossier Celebrates 99 Days until Christmas

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau kicked off "99 Days 'til Christmas" by visiting area media outlets with Santa Bob and Mrs. Claus. Santa Bob is a 2012 graduate of the International University of Santa Claus, a member of the Amalgamated Order of Real-Bearded Santas, and is known locally as "the Bass Pro Shops Santa." His real-life wife, Mrs. Beth Claus, was with Santa Bob and was costumed and in-character.

"We wanted to begin generating excitement about upcoming holiday events, to generate awareness for the Holly Jolly Handbook – a local holiday entertainment guide – and to make audiences aware of [www.holidaytrailoflights.com](http://www.holidaytrailoflights.com), a website featuring



Tuesday, Sept. 17, Chris Jay, public relations and social media manager at the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau conducted local media calls with Santa Bob and Mrs. Claus as part of the 99 Days until Christmas promotion.

Santa Bob and local artists, visit the Tourist Bureau's YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/SBCTB11>.

upcoming holiday events in Shreveport-Bossier," said Chris Jay, public relations and social media manager at the Tourist Bureau.

Santa Bob, Mrs. Claus and Chris Jay visited local media outlets, raising awareness about Shreveport-Bossier holiday events, giving out gingerbread cookies provided by Lilah's Bakery and body-scanning reporters with Santa Bob's Naughty or Nice iPad app. Media outlets visited include live morning shows at *KTAL*, *KTBS* and *KSLA*, an interview with Annie Anderson at *KMSS* and the reporters at *The Forum News* and *Bossier Press-Tribune*.

To view videos of the 99 Days until Christmas promotion featuring

# Shreveport-Bossier Selected to Host South Central Motorcoach Association's 2014 Joint Annual Meeting and Marketplace

Shreveport-Bossier has been selected as host site of the Second Regional Motorcoach Association Meeting of the South Central Motorcoach Association, the Alabama Motorcoach Association, and the Georgia Motorcoach Operators Association. The Regional Meeting will be held August 17-20, 2014. The selection of Shreveport-Bossier was recently announced in Birmingham, AL. The selection is the result of a highly-competitive bid process completed by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

"We are very excited about Shreveport-Bossier hosting the Second Regional Motorcoach Association Meeting, which will draw motorcoach operators from six states, as well as the vendor members who support the motorcoach industry by supplying coach products and services and the members who represent hotels, attractions, theatres, restaurants, and destinations all over the U.S.," said Jim Pitstick, president of the South

Central Motorcoach Association.

The South Central Motorcoach Association membership consists of motorcoach owners, operators and associates from Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Adding the states of Alabama and Georgia, the meeting will attract 350 or more delegates, including motorcoach and group tour operators, motorcoach and travel industry vendors and associates, destination marketing organizations and others. In addition to participating in meeting and marketplace sessions, event delegates will enjoy a golf tournament, explore the local community during scheduled tours, and enjoy free time for shopping and dining during their stay in Shreveport-Bossier.

"We're extremely excited about the opportunity to host the 2014 Regional Motorcoach Association Meeting," said Kelly Wells, Tourist Bureau vice president of sports and tourism. "The motorcoach group market is a large part of what makes our tourism industry as strong as it is today."